

# Bard

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# Bard

= = = = =

The spell casts back  
the sun rises.  
She spoke to the bishop  
her mother listened  
at the forest door—

a day, a day  
is a domestic drama,  
the missing husband,  
the frantic child.

2.  
I play that role.  
I wander through the music  
looking for friends.  
I play cards with tree leaves,  
I get tipsy on shadows,  
I cry my heart out  
and laugh happily  
because no one hears me.

3.

Sometimes the bishop  
sends an answer—  
a silver robe to wear,  
a white bird to perch on the roof—  
gull or dove  
what the devil difference does it make—  
all birds are from heaven.

4.

Then the ink sinks in,  
the letter lingers.  
I sneak a peek at it,  
more fame, more money  
but two extra hours  
in every day.

                    The year  
has tilted on its monkey pole,  
time has changed.

5.

And next morning again  
on the phone to the bishop—  
everything normal again,  
the bird comes back,  
the internet is working,  
language still helps,  
mom's cat teaches  
even mothers how to sleep.

I wish I were a better student—  
I drowse over my Etruscan Grammar  
but can't find the Irish word for dream.

1 August 2019

=====

**A play a day  
keeps death away.  
Tempest me no Tempests,  
I'm still at Romeo.**

**1 August 2019**

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Offering is enough.  
The swallows at evening  
snatch the light away  
over the pond, reeds  
so full of life, the silence  
that lives in water  
beneath the sound of it.  
Silence of the sky,  
the system. No wonder  
the augurs trembled  
with interpretation,  
frenzy when the sky  
spoke. Thunders,  
winds ever, the script  
of bird flight across  
the visible. And in  
their beds at night  
the priests still wonder  
why does everything,  
everything speak?

2 August 2019

= = = = =

Wilson helped  
but England did it,  
wrecked the two empires  
Ottoman and Austrian  
that somehow held  
half the world in peace.  
Since then the scattered  
remnants of the two  
are still fighting with  
themselves and not the other.  
Then Britain's pieces  
fell apart, as if in imitation  
of the hyper-Balkan frenzy.  
Now all over the world  
the little bandit presidents  
can rage and violate  
their people and their  
neighbors, squabble  
while the distant autarchs smile.

2 August 2019

## **SPELL**

**Come back in time  
from where you've been  
or when,  
          come back in leaf  
and eelpout,  
          song and trestle,  
hurry over water,  
          burrow upright  
in arches,  
          civil as sunlight,  
appear, appear!**

**2 August 2019**



= = = = =

**Sedulous inquiries  
from weary scholars  
who still at recess stand  
in front of mirrors  
over the wash room sinks  
combing their long hair,  
brushing it smooth,  
twenty strokes on either side,  
comb the loose hairs from the brush.  
Then back to history—  
all its mysteries  
are meant for you,  
you are what it means.**

**2 August 2019**

=====

**Things happen so we have something to  
understand—  
why not believe it, why not trust  
the world is evidence of something more?**

**(The Eternal Question)**

**2 August 2019**

= = = = =

Everything is in the poem  
everything is in the poem you're reading.  
Everything is in the poem you're writing.  
Writing is reading.  
That is the secret dream taught me.  
The dream said everything  
everything is in the poem—  
that was the whole dream  
and everything is.

3 August 2019

**(*Das Wunder der Heliane* last night. The music began in the second act and got there in the third. Strange inversion— so many operas are richest in Act I.)**

=====

**7:53 quiet as a Sunday  
nothing stirs.  
We're all saying Mass  
quiet as we can.  
Each breath a prayer.  
Restless children  
are theologians,  
working out meaning  
muscle by muscle.  
But not now.  
Now is stillness  
as if the Mass had ended.**

**3 August 2019**

= = = = =

**Learn Latin  
with your head on my lap  
so I can hear you murmur  
my mother tongue  
the ses taught me  
and know you sleep easy.  
For language  
is the sweetest dream,  
the furthest west  
of all our sailings,  
crisscross longitudes,  
the song on fire.**

**Sleep well,  
the limb of a friend  
your best pillow,  
where the words  
are spelled correctly  
all through your dream**

**so you wake  
with a beautiful babble**

everybody understands,  
sleep well, sleep deep  
dear friend,  
my lap is soft and warm,  
learn language as you sleep,  
oi had to learn it  
from a hard book  
made from a harder tree  
but yield it to you now  
easy, easy,  
both of us glad  
in something like sleep.

3 August 2019

= = = = =

**There are foreigners in the trees  
disguised as empty spaces  
between the native leaves,  
you can tell them by how dark they are  
until the sun comes up and they  
put on their bright disguise,  
Venetian carnival of every morning.  
But they are foeign still,  
emptiness clothed in light,  
welcome migrants, we need them so,  
urgent messengers from silence.**

**3 August 2019**



= = = = =

Early enough for a swim  
if I swam  
or a run if i ran  
or a walk if I must--

my father used to say  
go for a spin  
that means in the car,  
go out and drive

slow down unfamiliar  
roads, past houses  
unknown, and fields of crops  
we town-lubbers can't name.

drive through the woods  
past cute churches of the wrong  
religion, empty schoolyards,  
a little bridge you're scared to cross

**and then the spin is over.  
I grow nostalgic for yesterday  
afternoon or was it Thursday,  
wheat fields of a neighbor county.**

**3 August 2019**

## MEANING

*for A.G.*

What does it mean  
to say things and it be art?  
What is the other side of meaning?  
You tell the interviewer all you can  
childhood on the grass,  
the horse, the monocle,  
your aunt's patchwork quilt,  
the book by Kandinsky,  
the weird man who talked  
about Rudolf Steiner's color theories  
and put his hand on your knee,  
what does it mean  
to touch another person,  
does it matter where,  
is that the place where meaning  
happens? Can you put that in a picture?

2.

You told the truth--  
the root is in the sky.  
Just look at it deeply,

but shyly, it will  
tell you who you are.  
And color is a glorious  
accident of your identity.

3.  
Your brush is busy  
on a big sheet of masonite  
getting redder by the minute,  
yellower, deeper, until  
space opens into the realm  
of the lost, the land  
you're always remembering.  
Dremin. People pass  
behind you, murmuring praise.  
You hear them, you say Of  
course I love you. And (this  
is vital) you don't turn away.

**4.**

**Because what yu see on the wall  
(you're sending your seeing onto the wall)  
is what they;ll see, Abd all they see,  
and what they see will give them  
all manner of things--including you.  
What more could they ask? Or you give?**

**3 August 2019**

## **HIBISCUS**

**We want to keep looking.  
Fireflies, the tendency  
of Sharon's roses to veer  
frm blue to pink in rain.  
And who is Sharon anyhow?  
Don;t give me the ,Bible--  
there's a woman out there,  
a woman who invented roses.**

**3 August 2019**

=====

can you hear me  
and if you can  
tell me why the leaves  
keep turning red in autumn  
someone must know  
it can't just be chemistry  
they didn't teach that in my school.

3 August 2019

= = = = =

I'm speaking in the hope  
that what I say will  
go out and find you,  
your house, where you live  
in the forest of your imagination  
where all the books you've read  
go back into the wood of trees  
their shadows stretching  
out across your skinny little roads  
that run from darkness to darkness,  
to give you truth that looks like leaves.  
I hope that what I say  
confundrum can live with you  
can keep you company  
be there in the morning, I hope  
you find your way to answer me,  
me and all the others need you  
you who are the living  
silence of the world.

3 August 2019



## AUGUST ANSWERS US

for Anne Gorrick

1.

Circle by extraction  
unicursal blue  
how are you Anne today  
I've healed my shadow  
and stretched it on your lawn

2.

Be careful where you dine  
the text is shallow here and there  
the cliffs can crumble into toast  
and there all the Oregons won't help  
seeing a hawk leaves  
a sour taste in the mouth

3.

I'm really trying to help  
because we haven't seen

**each other in the moon  
or even stars, a float  
on Middle Lake has  
teenage population  
you can tell by sound.**

**4.  
Ear I mean  
the thing you're so good at  
so good the tailor  
comes to you for thread  
and the way you flounce through every door  
every day a birthday party**

**5.  
Because you know the tune  
it all holds together,  
Methodist manners and Bolshevik verbs  
a loaf of bread quiet  
on a white painted table!  
What a picture! Kadinsky,  
Beethoven, Westinghouse!**

6.

I really mean it  
we have a window screen built in  
you know to slip the mesh  
bold as bacon speak your way in,  
irresistible! Insinuations  
of pure meek energy  
enough to spin the globe  
one more time before.

7.

Remember when you pulled  
Adam out of a hat  
and wound the toy train up  
in Eden? Remember  
stovepipe junction and the girl  
you hated for her shiny hair  
but grew to love  
you both fell in love  
with tennis on the asphalt court?

8.

How strange remember is  
a paragraph with no punctuation  
blue as my eyes used to be  
reading smutty textbooks late at night  
don't deny it I was there  
sometimes I turned the pages for you  
when you wearied of licking your fingers.

9.

So it's been too long  
no cookies no cheese  
maple's not the only tree with sap  
my wife and I often go to the opera  
so we could meet there in the lobby  
humming what we thought we heard.

10.

Or if that's no help, golf.  
Most anyone can hold a stick,  
a ball rolls by itself.  
Come in the golf cart like a goddess,

**serenade the silly men  
in Madras shorts and yellow sweaters  
they call it Chennai now  
but who knows why.**

**11.**

**The takeaway's a long hello.  
The chariots of Flarfistan  
roll through our timid streets  
swishing away at mere intentions,  
free of sermons the good wind heals,  
blows away the guesswork of desire,  
a word's enough to live in  
isn't it and three of them make a city.**

**12.**

**I thought I was finished  
but the sky said No.  
Much study needed before  
silence is legitimate  
I'm still fumbling at the door  
the library is closed for good.**

**5 August 2019**

## **A SMALL BOOK FOR BRIAN WOOD**

**The line meets itself  
we come around  
and meet ourselves departing**

**o white sky of dawn  
silence is the longest opera**

**\***

**Sometimes things have a way  
of being in two  
places at once  
the forest and the sea  
the castle and the emergency room  
that is how love came to be  
a tuft of frizzy hair around the heart**

**\***

**Learn the magnetism of without desire.  
The horse you ride may be your mind**

**and God knows where it carries you  
prairie puszta grasslands steppes  
sometimes I can feel winter in your bones**

**\***

**The hardest thing of all  
is trying to make sense of sense.**

**\***

**A foot away from the eye  
a magnifying glass  
turns the world upside down.  
Fact. God send us distances!**

**\***

**People inside our bodies  
mill around chatting  
philosophies and other fashions  
of the mind. Leave me alone  
I'm tempted to tell them  
but then I would be alone.  
Alone inside.**

\*

When we were kids  
they put us on horses  
smiled and took pictures.  
The horses are still there  
I see them in your drawings  
the fierce muscular empty  
spaces between the lines

\*

Lying in the field  
on my belly I thought  
the roots of little plants  
were great trees  
between me and the sky,  
seemed a jungle, God,  
sometimes the size  
of things breaks my heart.

\*



In the darkest part of night's crystal  
a pyramid arose, speechless,  
waiting for us to speak to it,  
say anything, say Mass on its bones  
as once, once we-- but that's  
another story, another night.  
How did you learn so much  
about the world that isn't even  
there yet despite all our yearning?

\*

A harp  
her hands  
strumm-stroking  
along the strings  
high out there  
to low in here,  
hands unzipping  
a skirt. Or just a coat,  
fawn colored,  
leather.

\*

**Mushroom giving a sermon.  
Vegetation is so religious,  
no wonder we stand around  
in cold stone churches  
pretending to be flowers.  
Or carrots. Or winter kale,  
wounded by mythology.**

**\***

**How serious a line is!  
o thin you'd think it  
would be Vienna frivolous  
but no, it's solemn,  
an anguished melody  
wrenched out of Sibelius,  
a simple line. O ink  
of the world, how you sing.**

**\***

**Hair swept back  
we meet the wave.  
From so far away  
it has come  
to curl up at our feet—  
you'd think we were Romans  
accorded the obeisance  
as we are of so many things.**

**\***

**Memory wields a weird pencil  
ever since Conte got the lead in  
means graphite really  
a little stick to rule the round world.**

**\***

**(5 August 2019)**

**= = = = =**

**I am the other.  
The I I bear  
I bear for you**

**so you can know  
me and know  
yourself known.**

**\***

**And that was enough to say. I woke me with it,  
a card of identity, a foreword to anything to be  
said, first oage finally written of a huge book  
begun long ago without it. The word catches  
up with itself.**

**6 August 2019**

= = = = =

**Something about the breath,  
something about history  
and girls walking down a southern street  
in a painting on a post office wall.**

**Something about the moon maybe  
and the cinnamon bun on your plate,  
a book in translation but from  
what language did it come**

**over what seas? Something  
about watercress humble at the edge  
of streams, something about danger,  
Roman ruins, copper urn full of lilies.**

**6 August 2019**

= = = = =

Ever since most adults stopped smoking  
cigarettes  
there has been a huge quiet upsurge in  
barbecues  
outdoor grilling steaks and burgers, charcoal  
sacks,  
and costly gas-burning rigs on pungent  
patios—  
in fact a huge unnoticed *nostalgia for smoke*  
has overwhelmed the middle class. And what  
will winter bring, in po-mo villas with no  
fireplace?

6 August 2019

= = = = =

Now better back to bed--  
these days the moon  
rises in daytime, someone  
has to right the balance,  
turn day into night.  
the Z's of slumber spreading  
out above me like the deep  
crown of leaves on walnut trees,

6 August 2019

**= = = = =**

**Glancing**

**I think better than romancing,  
a smile on the street  
worth more than a month in the sheets.**

**Be quick and be gone  
and leave the other free to be  
other and other and another.**

**6 August 2019**



= = = = =

I hope the sky  
hasn't run out of rain,  
I hope it writes  
all over us today,  
the intricate grisaille  
of all it says.

6 August 2019

**[MORE F OR WOOD BOOK]**

**\***

**Hair swept back  
we meet the wave.  
From so far away  
it has come  
to be here, here  
is the furthest place.**

**\***

**It takes more than trumpets and drums  
to turn a dog into an army--  
what kind of person would let a dog  
anyhow? Open spaces feel for a way out--  
all that music like that does  
is stifle the sound of our own blood.**

**\***

In France the hedgehog nestles  
in the tall grass of the berm  
along the Roman road.  
Cute and prickly  
like the thought of home.  
*Herisson.* Or a child at a table  
alone on a sidewalk cafe.

\*

You can't help  
what you see.  
The eye is a feather  
that tickles the world  
until it talks.

\*

Out of the storm cloud  
an immense rose  
descends over the village.  
The townspeople cry

**and laugh or hold their breath--  
will love come with it,  
will they smell it in their sleep?**

**\***

**The reproductive organs  
of a square  
or any geometric figure  
are clean of germs  
as we used to call  
agents of distress and dismissal  
but even Euclid knew better.**

**\***

**The saguaro cactus  
outside the minor league stadium  
trembles to the roar of the crowd--  
our games are tough on the natural world.**

**\***

The pen never left the paper  
till the world was done.  
Shipyards and queasy diners,  
a girl walking along a cliff--  
it's all in the Bible if you look hard enough.

\*

Kite over the Hudson  
Morningside Heights  
those Japaese!  
But then I remember  
rivers do all the work  
and we float here and there  
signless kites in pure atmosphere!

\*

Achilles in the story  
kills Hector and degrades  
his body. Makes me wonder  
what really happened.  
The little boysaw his father  
fall then fell himself.

**We must do all we can to get  
out of the story.**

**\***

**my father's Pontiac  
empty, windows open,  
side rod, field of cabbages  
far as I can see, sixty years  
doesn't last long, wrong  
verb, same sunshine  
beating down.**

**\***

**I hold these lines  
clenched  
high in the air  
every message  
you can imagine  
tries to squeeze  
its way through  
to you, to you.**

\*

Boukranion  
the sacred bull horns  
of Krete  
all they needed  
was some god  
to stretch strings  
between them  
and lyre away on them  
till even we can hear.

\*

Suppose a sister  
sat on a sunbeam  
on your lawn  
and she called it  
from the sky--  
what then?  
what color  
would answer that?

\*

**Silver shillings in Scottish purses  
and an animal of some sort  
peers out of its den,  
small, small, pika or chipmunk,  
liberty is always on the other side.**

**\***

**Pick up the wheel  
and carry it  
it still will guide you  
where to go--  
all our destinations  
are stored in our achines.**

**\***

**Cyclone weather  
a basketball crushed  
beneath a fallen bough  
an old word signifying poetry**



\*

The line says read me  
says need me  
but we all say that

\*

I saw a wolf once  
we were walking north  
and he passing south  
we watched each other  
respectful. a yard between us.  
There are still neighbors  
left in the world.

\*

and I alone  
am left to tell thee  
meant Ishmael  
and yet the whale's mouth  
opened like a flower  
upright, a calla lily

gasping from the sea.

\*

Strap yourself in  
roll up the windows  
and drive through the tunnel,  
tht long one at Saint-Die  
miles of it under the Vosges  
grey smoke of all our goings  
leaves wreaths of almost  
meaning we drive through  
and almost is a pretty place

\*

War was coming when I was young,  
it came and killed and went away  
but never all the way away, hate to say it  
but it's like a song once heard  
Americans can never quite forget.

\*

When lines I mean  
fold in upon themselves  
anger happens.  
the street fills with people  
wearing the wrong shirts  
and women fleeing from  
the shadows they cast as they run.  
When line meets line  
a ntension twists  
matter into new spaces,  
shouts in the street, bright  
blue buses pump out exhaust.  
Damn it, we've made ourselves  
a city again, when all we wanted  
was to walk with a friend on a hill.

\*

Come Upstate ad dream the city--  
this is best. It tastes like cough syrup,  
sweet and sharp at once, remember  
Cocillna? Probably not. A groove  
runs through the cranium inside  
divides past from present, and over it

a bridge stretches, narrow, narrow,  
and the toll to cross it is terribly high.

\*

Just before the storm  
a white deer  
stepped down the hill  
to where the bird seed  
spilled from the feeder  
then as the trees darkened  
went back up the rise  
stood white then unappeared.

\*

Between two lines  
a breath of wind  
add a third  
and music comes,  
four makes a beast  
roar gently in  
your own sweet woods,

\*

.

Every white space  
is an animal  
every line  
is what's on its mind.  
Thinking scars  
the surfaces we see.

\*

An altar rail  
sleeps between  
the doing  
and the done.  
At it it is said  
we receive.  
I saw a picture  
of those distances  
space coming down the stairs.

\*

Evening wants to come again  
you can hear it sighing  
all through the morning--  
it sounds like a piece of paper  
lofted by the wind. It sounds  
like a line on the palm of your hand  
or your mother's hand  
when once you found her crying  
and asked her why, why?  
And she said Because  
the nights are all gone.

\*

A line is a summary  
of all absent things.

(7-8.VIII.19)

\*

= = = = =

She is *simurgh*  
thirty birds  
self of all selves

woman woman  
this woman  
this this means

to locate her  
by the lake  
lake meals

wet spot left  
by the moon's  
drooling

the ale of evening  
means wherever  
she stands

be close be close  
so her shadow  
drenches you too

river of her  
river of meals  
this one is

all there is.

7 August 2019



== == == == ==

**Ink spots on the fallen  
leaves remember?  
Linden does it best  
or maple, heart or hand  
you choose, just  
let the wet words  
touch you as they dry  
and all your thirst will fade.**

**7 August 2019**

= = = = =

Cloud on a ladder,  
dog on a pole  
the carnival is in town  
soon as you close your eyes—  
shut the door and shout!

7 August 2019

= = = = =

Being sure  
about the answer  
is such a quick song  
can't help loving  
for instance you

the music's short  
the song is long  
what can I mean  
by saying that?

a leaf comes  
only from a tree  
that's what the cathedral  
is trying to say

O poor stone bird.

8 August 2019

## ARIA

Not the whole machinery of narrative  
stage scenery costumes light  
make the opera. It is the *aria*,  
the solo song or tense duet  
that springs out of the goings on  
and reaches my heart via their breath—  
no wonder they call it *air*

8 August 2019

= = = = =

**An ordinary graham cracker  
nibbled in daylight  
has the taste of a tidy  
bright cumulus cloud, puff  
of white coming over the trees.  
Try it and see.**

**8 August 2019**

## **WITCH HAZEL**

**You can buy a bottle of witch hazel  
easy in any drugstore in the U.S.  
Not so in Europe. Yet where else  
do witches come from? Did they  
all come here with their wise  
branches of hazel, seeds of wisdom?  
Some days I'm proud to be an American.**

**8 August 2019**

= = = = =

**for Barbara's Bday**

**There was a little lake  
that had a pretty lady  
who soon beside it  
set up her queen-size bed**

**to hold her husband  
and all the thoughts  
that water brings.  
healing the hollows.**

**And when she set  
one foot naked in  
the water told her  
Now you are in Spain**

**ad Africa, Cambodia  
and that funky spa  
in Thailand where  
never mind, never mind.**

**i cover all the world  
and when you're in me  
you're everywhere.**

**8 August 2019**

**= = = = =**

**for Barbara's Bday**

**There was a little pond  
that had a lovely lady,  
it told her: Come sleep  
beside me, bring your bed**

**your queen-size bed  
to hold you and your dearest  
and all the thoughts  
my loving water brings.**

**healing the hollows.  
And when she set  
one foot naked in.  
the water told her:**

**Now you're in Cancun, Crete,**



**or that funky little spa  
in Thailand where  
never mind, never mind.**

**I am yours and I am water.  
I cover all the world  
and when you're in me  
you're everywhere**

**Small print is revised version, 17.8.19**

= = = = =

**Mourning coffee?  
Take the ness  
off happiness  
and blow it in the sea—  
a rock to stand on  
and be beautiful—  
is that too much  
to ask of daylight?**

**8 August 2019**

## THE XII LABORS OF HERAKLES

The twelve labors of Him Who  
looked at his name.

One day he sees  
he is meant to add  
luster to her crown,  
not just praise her  
the way silly  
priests and poets do,  
but do, do  
things never done before  
and do them for her,  
to blossom his renown.

(All sleep I wrote, lines and passages,  
they're safe inside now, safe  
from being written down)

(This is my labor  
for her  
to bring new deeds to light  
painting the wall of the skull

the never-ending light)

One day he sees.

He picks up the palette the painter set down  
and walks to the wide wall.

Paints on it the image of a bull  
vast horns, comely body stretched  
across the length of the wide room.  
He kneels down before it and prays —

Forgive me, lord animal, lord  
of meadow and shore, forgive me  
for I have slain you  
by describing you  
with colors meant for coal and flowers,  
blue as thunder you stand  
slain into visibility  
from the infant forms of life you are inside.

He steps back  
from what he has done.  
Seeing  
is subtraction—

one more thing  
to take inside  
and hide  
among my secrets,  
snatched from the world  
into me

he thought  
and was right to do so.

I am religion and I know.

Know these things if not all things.

He left colors on the wall  
and went out  
walked in the country  
miles and miles  
until he saw \_\_ like boys  
fighting on the ground  
wrestling and screaming  
He stood above them  
and they stopped  
looked up at him  
angry, perverse

as only kids can be,  
he laughed down at them  
and their anger ceased,  
they felt shame instead,  
would have kissed  
but for shame.  
They jumped up and ran away.  
This was the second  
labor of Heracles.

But none of this  
is what my sleepwake said,

what I tell you now  
is just a replacement,  
a substitute for the truth.  
But everything is.

A strong wind last night  
a big branch fell from our linden tree.  
He came and picked it up,  
made a staff of it  
to lean on in boggy going  
or when he'd walked too long.

He seldom rode.  
But once shared a cab  
with a girl I know  
to the airport  
on his way to Crete  
(she was off to Scotland  
but airports go everywhere)  
and she told me how well-  
behaved he was,  
courteous and silent,  
tipped the driver,  
puzzled them both  
because he had no luggage  
but they too were  
too shy to ask

And going all by yourself  
is the third labor of Hercules—

I use his Roman name now,  
because I feel close to Italy  
where I was raised,  
at least in the language of  
and he was my *gombar*.

So Hercul- or Herakl-  
strides through the island  
until he meets the lion  
in the Prospect Park Zoo.  
Stands at the cage, reaches  
out his hand to stroke  
the rough fur of his friend's mane.  
I weep at your captivity  
he said. Not so,  
not so, the lion said.  
I have found peace here  
in this strange monastery  
where each of us  
brings his or her own god,  
we say our own prayers  
and they give us food.  
And people come by  
and looking at them feeds our dreams.  
And we are happy, sort of,  
the way monks traditionally are,  
not much to do  
and lots of time to think  
and go look at the joyous seals



leaping sleek in their pool  
and always wet!

(But none of this  
is what the wakesleep said.  
All of this was just hiding in the sky,  
easy enough to haul it down in words.  
(Not much credit to me, but I go on saying.)

And leaving alone  
is a labor too  
the lion said.

Herakles was fascinated by trucks,  
big white 51 ft. vans,  
noisy, sluggish turns.  
He took a job driving one  
from Herkimer to Fond-du-Lac,  
interstate as much as he could  
but sometimes, sometimes  
slow, slow  
along country roads  
like his hand  
softly caressing

a girl's arm  
his rig had to go,  
slow, slow,  
under the trees,  
white and noisy,  
dreamy white  
on green roads—  
and then the highway  
helped again  
and so he came  
to where the magpies are,  
quit his job

Letting go is a work of its own —  
he spent three nights in a nice motel  
never turned the TV on even once,  
slept a lot and dreamt dreams  
white as traffic on a silent road.

He found a wheel and spun it,  
it rolled along beside him as he walked,  
his fingers guiding it, using it gently,  
a big wide, nine-spoked wheel,  
light and easy, companionable,

rubber tired, quiet, as if some bicycle  
had other things to do.

He rolled his wheel!  
My Wheel, my Wheel, my Wheel  
he thought, dear friend,  
teach me to keep moving  
but never change,  
teach me to be the same  
wherever I go  
and all I am is going,  
just like you.

(You'd think he was a pilgrim!  
But he had no goal.  
Or his only goal was going.  
Does that qualify?  
Is his life and are his deeds  
eligible for pilgrimage?)

He asked a river once  
(the Susquehanna, actually)  
and as usual it couldn't decide—  
but its watery uncertainty  
is itself a guide,

(...tu sais?  
the French priest said  
in the Wisconsin diner,  
mopping up the last of his soup  
with a not-very-interesting slice of bread  
that did look better  
ripe with the tomato smear  
and they used to spell this place Ouisconsin.)

The next job on line  
was teaching classics in the Hadramawt  
in a pricy little school  
for sons of emirs eager to read Aeschylus.  
He barely remembered his native Greek,  
rubbed his temples to bring it back,  
no wine to help him in dry Araby.

To teach  
what you don't know  
but get it right—  
that is the greatest  
maybe labor of all.

9 August 2019

## HERCULES REFLECTS ON HIS INFANT EXPLOIT

Snakes enough in the desert  
but should be left alone—  
forgive them for scaring us,  
they only do it by mistake—  
they are frightened of us so much  
lying helpless limbless at our feet,  
their fear is so intense it radiates  
so we feel it too. Leave them be.

9 August 2019

=====

A woman in the audience  
raises her arms to heaven  
Heaven answers. An uneasy  
silence suffuses the concert hall.  
Music was never like this,  
one whispers, who wrote it?  
Silence is too difficult to score—  
it must grow from our skin,  
another guesses. Or from beath.

9 August 2019  
Fisher

= = = = =

**Ship on boundless ocean  
forgets where it's bound.  
Destiny is always now,  
one sparkling, joyous,  
curling wave at a time.**

**9 August 2019  
Fisher**

= = = = =

The soft forgiveness  
built into things.  
The second movement  
is usually quieter, sadder  
maybe, the way things are  
But then we change our minds  
allegro con moto  
and reach up to the sky.  
And the wky says Why?

9 August 2019  
Fisher



= = = = =

I would like to try  
a new tree  
Not for it to  
climb me, just

Stand there  
the way they do  
looking east  
to see the sun

whatever else  
may happen  
in all our branches  
she always shows up.

9 August 2019

= = = = =

**Whenever you pick up the pen  
something happens.  
This little lightning-rod  
sucks something out of heaven.**

**But where is heaven?  
Is it in the sky? Or inside  
you? Or in this Grail,  
this little jat of ink.**

**10 August 2019**

**( woke dreaming that.)**

= = = = =

**Dreamt the leaves were turning  
already, on this street you drove  
down to meet me. Just a few  
buy showing red—I wave wildly  
to tell you, as if my arms could shout.**

**10 August 2019**

= = = = =

**Tell me I was wrong  
to sleep so long.  
A whole eight hours  
while the busy world  
drifted out of my  
control. Tell me sleep  
is the rapturous enemy,  
the Mata Hari of  
our poignant history.  
Keep watch! they cry  
but I dozed off  
and every night the  
enemy comes closer.  
Or am I wrong  
again? Tell me, please  
tell me I'm all wrong.**

**10 August 2019**

= = = = =

Cool air this morning  
and nobody bothers me  
yet. The email is all ads,  
the phone silent as a  
deck of cards. Only the air  
comes through the window  
and I do like air--a trait  
of my species, and the air  
knows it, loves me this day  
(I hope the whole day)  
for reasons of her own. All  
i can do is be grateful, deep  
gratitude, and breathe in.  
Not just the lungs but the skin.  
Not just me but the trees.  
This morning air loves us all.

10 August 2019

= = = = =

**It's not easy  
to be a pagan.**

**Every single  
thing has meaning,**

**everything you see  
is a sign.**

**No leaf  
without its message.**

**10 August 2019**

= = = = =

**Blustering with meanings  
I rush through the door  
bruising the doorpost  
with my sore elbow. That  
is now instruction comes  
if you trust adults to do it.  
How about leaving children  
all together by themselves  
in a brightly lit room with  
things all around them., words  
on the wall and numbers on the floor  
a bird fluttering around, a globe  
to spin, what about seeing  
what happens when you leave  
the grown-ups out in the hallway.  
Maybe the kids woould never grow up.  
Maybe there would be no more war.**

**10 August 2019**

=====

**Asmiring the enemy  
is a sound idea.  
Mostly the enemy is  
itself an idea**

**(independence! sat isfaction!)  
come humping your way  
over the horizon.  
Desist. Leave alone.**

**An idea is a big nervous dog  
more teeth than intelligence—  
let it run past you, admire  
its lines, but don't bring it home.**

**11 August 2019**



=====

**This is what happens  
when I wake too soon.  
I start saying things  
instead of listening..  
Or is saying listening too,  
listening with your lips?**

**11 August 2019**

## **TISHA B'AV**

**The day the temple went down  
twice. The day the hierarchy  
came to an end. Never. Strange.  
Celebrate the day when God  
became not a place to visit  
but a place to be always, in  
and out, reality. The true  
temple is everywhere.**

**11 August 2019**

## **SURVIVAL KOANS**

**Desire knows  
no object but itself.**

**\***

**Now is the only  
time there is.**

**\***

**The wall doesn't have ears.  
But it has a mouth  
and speaks clearly enough.**

**\***

**A stone listens hard  
but speaks softly.**

**\***

**If you can dance to it,  
don;t.**

**\***

**Only a really empty  
bottle floats.**

**\***

**Music happens  
to the air  
we're trapped in  
all our lives.**

**\***

**A flute  
has no shame.**

**11 August 2019  
Fisher**

= = = = =

**Walking there and walking back  
different feet for all the years--  
do I remember myself back then?  
He could easily be somebody else  
since I remember him being there  
same way i remember the place  
itself and what went on there,  
the thing I call myself back then  
is just part of the same memory,  
part of the furniture. Same way  
i see my legs stretched out before  
me now. I think it is me.  
Just as i think it is now.**

**11 August 2019**

= = = = =

Tree. Sea.  
Or see  
the blue  
shoulders of the sky  
rub against  
our quiet being here,  
the haunches of earth  
press against us,  
urging us to stay.  
Giving. Forgiving.  
And a smile  
floats downb the sky.

2.  
Or all these years  
I have been falling  
to be in this place  
where you can find me.  
Fine me. Tree. Sea.

3.

Or live nearby,  
your phone number  
I read in the lines of my palm.

4.

Or always live nearby,  
no further than a kiss apart,  
crows stagger down the sky—

I know these things,  
I have an immense mirror  
at the end of the hall,  
narrow, narrow, but very tall.  
I see the whole story,  
how it falls from the sky:  
you come walking across the lawn to me.

12 August 2019

## **THE FRIENDS**

**No one out there.  
Their voices are all inside.  
Turn pff the phone and listen.  
Reach out in the dark and touch.**

**12 August 2019**



**= = = = =**

**We say “You mean  
the world to me.”  
But in fact  
you mean the world.**

**12 August 2019**

= = = =

**Stribg quartet of grey sky  
less light below the leaves  
we live in the wood the sound  
stores what little light we know  
Haydn or Mozart how brittleside  
happiness is, unmarked grave,  
royal patron, busy bored musicians,  
walk beside me till the end  
that's the only thing i know,  
can i call it a song?**

**13 August 2019**

= = = = =

Watch that cloud.  
Which one?  
The one you can;t see.  
So, I'm watching.  
Can you see the color of her eyes?  
Bluish greenish. Ashkenazic hue.  
Marry her right away.  
I did I do I said I do.  
There is nothing more you have to do.

13 August 2019

= = = = =

Maybe there really is  
a universal morality—  
rise with the dawn  
and all will be  
well as it can be

\*

Guesswork, pieces of late,  
scrimshaw the years  
engrail on our faces,  
or not, or never,  
dyed hair of sunrise  
gifting (the merchant  
word) the old day.  
Am I there yet  
or can I sleep?

13 August 2019

=====

Idle energies  
I saw once in Wyoming  
rock leap  
and ice sing  
and all of it still  
waiting, waiting.  
The human  
trituration is lacking,  
more men,  
more women!  
And then  
daughters and sons\_\_  
will make their revelation  
and we turn  
wise, you, even me!

13 August 2019

= = = = =

The birds wake Sherry up at dawn  
chattering outside her tower window  
and making her cat go wild with hunting  
frenzy and there she is, eyes wide open  
and not even full daylight, what to do?  
Get a friend to write a magic spell  
or send the cat on pilgrimage  
to some other holy place to learn  
the privilege of the stationary.  
Cats hate to go. They run  
fast as they can to stay here.  
No, won't work. The magic spell or nothing.  
Or hide the tower in a cave  
or with rubber-tipped tweezers  
pluck each bird from the sky  
while it's still a block away  
and all you can hear  
is the little river trickling by.

13 August 2019

= = = = =

**As if the beginning  
then there were  
whales on larboard  
horizon in the head.**

**\***

**Where did yu come flying from  
to be so hugely here?  
Aren't the marshes of the neighborhood  
without needing you to be sea?**

**13 August 2019**

= = = = =

**One skips  
one scatters  
one sits dangling  
legs off the wooden  
bridge and fishes.**

**One clouds  
one climbs,  
one looks in the cold  
oven and takes  
out a loaf of bread.**

**One slips  
one slides  
one opens the window  
but no bird flies in**

**one stands  
one staggers  
one leans on a tombstone  
and waters the day-lilies.**



**One shouts  
one shimmers  
one takes a bus home  
right bus but wrong house.**

**One searches  
one stitches  
the garment one wanted  
was always already on one's skin.**

**14 August 2019**

= = = = =

Caught in a cloud  
one is born again.  
(One I know  
wants to be two,  
a kite  
caught in a cloud)

Caught in a clod  
the worm  
praises creation,  
life has space for everyone.

14 August 2019

= = = = =

**Caught in cloth  
the minister  
sets down the chalice  
after everyone has sipped  
and wonders.**

**14 August 2019**

## **SOB STORY**

**We keep wondering  
who we are  
until we're not.**

**14 August 2019**

=====

**Plenty of people love me—  
they just don't know who I am.**

**14 August 2019**

=====

Great music  
is a wound on death's hide,  
music can be closer  
than your own thought—  
even some tune can unsay doubt.  
Melody fingers the mind.

14 August 2019

=====

No reason to look here  
for what is there—  
but here it is all the time.

14 August 2019

= = = = =

**Catching the form of something  
pressing it in clay  
baking it hard and firm and clear  
talking to it every day.**

**\***

**A word hovers over its thing.  
It tries to tell you something—  
are you listening?**

**\***

**Why should one's voice be husky at waking  
when one has been talking all  
night in one's dreams?  
What is that other language  
that needs no breath?**

**14 August 2019**



= = = = =

I wonder if it will rain—  
but wonder is always wet,  
always a fisherman  
untangling his net  
hoping that stuck in there  
is not just flotsam and plastic but a real  
live fish. The fish  
hopes otherwise. Hope  
is a happy habit  
but a habit, a theological  
habit but a habit.  
So I just wonder if it will rain today.

15 August 2019

## VESTIBULE

1.

the little room  
before the room  
within,  
the entryway,  
the Galilee to the great  
redemption work  
of being here,  
of living  
on earth, in a house.

2.

In churches they call it narthex,  
a way to go in  
before you go in,  
a little shrine room of the liminal,  
Goddess Limen, the Queen of Between.

3.

I thought of the vestibule on Brown Street  
up the brick steps from the street,  
the vestibule on Anawan,  
brown wood and glass and  
all the spaces where clothes are hung  
betwixt and between, outdoors and in,  
both, raincoats, scarves,  
umbrellas, walking sticks,  
the silent traffic of going out and coming  
home.

4.

I wish I had a vestibule—  
not just in my house,  
I wish there were a vestibule in me  
where I could doff the outer trappings,  
“identity,” and be at home.  
And where you could come  
civilly to visit me,  
take off your attitudes and just be.  
Then a house would be a true place,  
a hovel of heaven.

15 August 2019, Twin Lakes

=====

**A millionaire of willow trees  
weeping for joy,  
and cornfields everywhere  
and Magali Noel sang  
Hurt me, Johnny  
on the other side of the old brick wall,  
every brick of it a ripe  
sunset of its own.**

**15 August 2019  
Twin Lakes**

= = = = =

Things blur in the morning.  
Lost names! Movies  
no one has seen!  
A book in Portuguese!  
A doctor specializing  
in an unknown disease!  
Maladies of Conscience  
it says above the door—  
is it a phone booth,  
a confessional, orgone box,  
a steamer t tunk  
that will gobble you up  
and spit you out  
happy in Tahiti?  
Every thought is a trapdoor.  
Especially dangerous in the morning,  
floor slick with the dust of dream.

15 August 2019  
Twin Lakes

## **ASSUMPTA EST MARIA**

**And everything happens  
again and again  
the years make nony  
sense of our nows,  
our VOWS.**

**2.           The shepherds  
are old now, think  
they've seen everything before,  
the virgin and her child,  
the wise men footsore or  
did they rely come on camels,  
we cant remember, were  
camels available back then,  
and what about the voices in the sky.  
why cant we recall the words,  
just the sound. But this is new--  
a full-grown woman,  
mature and wise and well-provided  
rising slowly into the sky,  
our only sky and she's up in it!**

3.

So much for shepherds--  
leave them to their sheep,  
their wooly memories.  
This is the day the other  
of the world goes u, in body,  
her body, this is the day  
the queen becomes the sky  
and ever after. i look up  
at the cumulus billowing  
around her over the Taghkanics,  
our hills her home  
her everywhere.

15 August 2019

(And in the night before or in the next, my  
mother died in her 88th year, in her sleep, on  
Long Island, near the sea she loved, 1990,  
when i was far away.)

=====

= = = = =

The caution the care  
the thews of intelligence  
rehearsed against  
the lubberly world--  
that was good thinking.

Ya nichevo na znayu  
heard in my head as we drove  
I know nothing  
is the best thing to think  
best thing to say.

To know anything is to be at risk.

15 August 2019



= = = = =

The impression lingers.  
two deer, no, three  
step out of the trees.  
We all share vowels,  
we move by breath,  
sometimes breath alone.  
To tell the truth. Deer  
have harsh voices, We  
cough in our sleep.

15 August 2019

= = = = =

Not so much the fire  
as the flame,  
not the language  
but the single word

leaps out of the magic  
of someone's moth  
and says!

And we hear  
whether we understand it or not.  
Understanding is unimportant—  
hearing is all.

16 August 2019

= = = = =

**Big truck goes by  
sounds empty  
as it hits a rut.  
What a strange  
life the driver knows,  
driving space  
through space,  
a fierce encapsulator,  
seven yards of emptiness  
going fast through the empty woods.**

**16 August 2019**

## **MORING ANTHEM**

**Hurry downstairs  
and do what you can,  
nothing more anyone  
can do, and passing  
traffic will shout out  
trumpets praising thee.**

**16 August 2019**

=====

**We tend to think  
the ancient Gods  
are still asleep.  
How wrong we think!**

**They stir our bodies  
to love and war, they let  
us talk and write and take  
my wife by the hand to bed.**

**16 August 2019**

== ==

Erase the ledger  
and start the tree again.  
There. A river.  
And there a meeting house,  
clapboard, empty,  
maybe some religion left within.  
I mean inside. Where the veins  
still leap up to the leaf,  
remember?

2.  
I think there is a game  
of throwing human words  
through time to see  
who catches them. Old game,  
not much public interest,  
like court-tennis or curling

pretty stone pots along the ice.  
And apples still fall from the tree.

3.  
Or give way to levity  
and dance at the fallen grammar  
the world map on the bathroom floor,  
chase the chickens out of the house  
and see who comes to take their place,  
smiling, book in hand, knowing your name.

4.  
The older woman in the brick-red sweater  
gets into her white hybrid  
and sits at the wheel a while  
evidently thinking.  
North or South. Chicken or veal.  
Dartmouth or Yale. Memory  
is toying with her now. And with me too  
since I can't recall her name.  
She starts the engine, turns  
on the radio. Public voices  
talking fast. Still sits there.

**Could she be waiting? Could I?**

**5.**

**Always room for one more**

**says the girl on the elevator.**

**The higher we go the more people get out**

**and at the top floor**

**only I am left to tell thee.**

**16 August 2019**



**A SET OF  
FUNERAL DANCES MOURNING  
GEORGE ECONOMOU**

**George George Georgios  
worker of the earth—  
farmer? Fabulator!  
Of such narratives as hold  
the earth in their hands  
and slowly, over ages,  
give the earth back to us.**

**And George told.**

**\***

**Remember remember?  
For us in school it is always  
September. We listened  
and smiled at learned jokes  
and made ome too.**

Professor Nelson teaching Spenser.  
All day I sat reading the Faerie Queene.  
We smirked a little how the wise men talked,  
Professor Nelson teaching Spenser,  
I sat all day and read The Faerie Queene  
We walked out and coffeed where we could  
Professor Nelson reciting Colin Clout  
and you remembered, remember?  
The hall I sat in was called Philosophy  
He explained the rustic, Tudor yokel, to us  
to you who knew full well  
how pigs eat rattlesnakes  
and how far the diner is for Sunday brunch,  
Professor Nelson taught us Spenser  
All day I sat and watchrd them come and go  
You imitated him sweetly, you knew the land,  
the urgent erth that makes us speak  
all day I watched them go and be gone.

\*

In the islands they dance  
at funerals, to please the land  
(there is so little of it)

to please the land with music,  
that makes sense, and bodies  
shaped and shaken by the air

they dance to, to give the land a gift  
and plead with it to take  
their brother in or their lover

their mother their children in  
or even now and then  
a poet given back by the sea.

\*

Late Middle Ages  
Early Renaissance  
that was your dance,  
so many pages

butterflies fluttering by  
over the grain fields of Montana  
where the Renaissance  
is still awake, the Reformation

any minute now, and one-sixth  
of the whole Canadian frontier  
shimmers just north of us he said,  
he said and I believed him  
because it's always wisest  
to believe a dance. I knew  
a dancer once and as I watched  
I saw that dance can never lie.

\*

Not Athens, Kalavrita.  
The real Greece is inland  
where philosophers fear to tread  
and the churches dealt more  
genlly with the older gods,  
the ones who came in male and female  
and ieven n between,  
the gods who knew about beauty  
and gave it to those who  
knew how to take. the dance of taking,  
Inland farmers who studied  
the earth and listened  
to what it says, farmers

no Gnostics, no Sophists,  
no restless Odysseus, no pale  
Alexandrian pastorals. Earth  
is work. Georgios means  
the one who works the earth,  
who stands on the land and holds  
his wife, stares the weather down  
and listens to her magic spells.

Thank the gods you married well.

\*

Now I must go down  
and feed the crows  
who teach me how to dance  
to such long sluggish lines  
by being quick. The child  
of anythis is something else--  
the crow taught me that.  
And explained that all we really  
have to do is change our minds.

16 August 2019

= = = =

Just let me talk to you  
I don't even know who you are  
the language will find you  
if you say anything at all  
I'll get to understand  
the wheat fields of your native country  
and the sound of water  
peculiar to your river  
the little one on its way to the big  
just let me talk  
in your neighborhood  
even your silence will tell me  
something, even silence  
can help in times like these  
and I don't even know when it is  
you could sing to me  
if you wanted to, I know  
you know so many songs,  
I know you know the pne  
about the blackbird and the moon  
the one about the church of the panthers

the waterfall of crystals ever flowing  
or be silent still if you choose  
all choices are yours  
and this time your silence  
(silence in song time)  
will mean different things  
you can't help it  
you're always meaning something  
that's why I want to talk  
so much to you, only to you,  
you understand everything  
I have to keep talking  
my silence is broken  
it falls from me word by word  
it's two hours before dawn  
the night is warm  
I sit here with my broken silence  
wondering about your name  
names are important to know  
but I barely know my own  
and you haven't told me yours yet  
a name is like music  
you can hear it over and over  
never get tired of listening

to how it vibrates and echoes  
and changes subtly every moment  
is it too much to ask  
will you tell me your name  
even listening to me  
is a kind of description  
a name is a description  
please let me go on  
just let me talk to you.

17 August 2019



## HOW TO WRITE

**Don't say tree  
say Japanese quince.**

**Dn't say flower  
say rose.**

**Don't say rose  
say Blushing Pink  
Slovakian Rose  
(Rosa fornicaria).**

**Don't say word  
say noun.**

**Don't say noun  
say child,  
but don't say child  
say Joseph  
say he's lying on the ground  
staring up at the stars  
he's trying to see  
through the leaves.**

**Don't say leaves,**

say fronds  
broad dark green  
of the Egyptian palm  
growing 36 meters from the Nile  
and he is crying.  
Or don't say that.  
Say tree.

17 August 2019

= = = = =

Close to the outlet  
the dreams run  
free and fast  
down the culverts  
of language deep  
into you and me.  
Then *sharing* happens  
that terrifying stain  
where thine becomes  
mine and the dreams  
rule our gaping world.

17 August 2019

= = = = =

On the screen  
a crowd of language  
shouting to be free,  
what does that ask  
of me? I sit and watch  
helpless. the way  
I'd watch the wind  
in the trees, all  
I can do is feel. Feel.  
Deep in the cavern  
of my heart I light  
a stupid candle and pray.

18 August 2019

= = = = =

It tries to find me  
it searches around in the yard  
the gravel the tile the patio  
it even ransacks the shadows.  
I watch from the window--  
I know well what doors are for,  
it can only find me  
if I so much as touch the knob,  
not even turn it, just the thought  
called 'open' may let it in.  
And if it finds me I will belong  
to it, hours, days maybe,  
and certainly the nights.

18 August 2019

= = = = =

The union of linden  
tree and full moon  
is high summer.  
Ink and brush  
to talk about that  
in archaic Chinese.  
We all knew how  
once but then forgot--  
stare into the pond  
and try to remember.  
Marriage is everywhere.

18 August 2019

## THE MANNEKIN

I'm trying not to think  
about a monstrous being  
I saw last night, one made  
to be as evil as IT seemed,  
a lifeless black man scarred  
all over to be a beast, eyeless,  
castrated, erect as he could be  
under branches crushing  
down on his head. I squirmed  
with disbelief. How could anyone  
bring such a thing into that  
special form of death called art?  
A thing like this can leper us.  
I went away thinking Burn it,  
burn the poor thing,  
maybe it means to bear  
all our sins and fears and pathogens  
into the healing smoke of being gone.

**(And she who made it set it up in a shrine and led us in one by one to worship it. Now let me wash my hands in Isaiah's songs, and beg holy Francesco for a healing kiss.**

**but mostly I look over the frontier and see Lama Norlha smiling kindly, saying "So stupid!" about the dreadful thing, but also at my fear of it.)**

**18 August 2019**



= = = = =

Everybody sleeps late on Sunday  
except the poor priest  
who has to get up and get ready  
but he's happy I suspect  
looking out at the meadows  
or the empty boulevards,  
for a little while he has  
God all to himself.

18 August 2019

## TAKE MEANING BACK

for Rebecca Wolff

Look at the crowds in Hong Kong  
Moscow Caracas, listen  
to their outcry, the cry  
to be free, which means to be  
and be themselves,

take meaning back  
from the government  
from business from capital,  
from men in power, men as power,  
take language back  
and cleanse it in poetry

only in poetry  
if anywhere  
can meaning be safe,  
water you can drink,  
grain safe to eat—

all poetry is language poetry

only in the cry of the individual  
*ill-silenced* by the words themselves  
only in the lone voice  
the almost personless voice of a poem  
can the crowd's word be heard

all poetry is ;language poetry—

only in poetry can language be healed,  
heard, give meaning back to us.

Write the poem. Take meaning back.

18 August 2019

## IN KINGSTON

**Under the image of Artemis  
in the King's town, the woman  
of all women rebuking the mere  
man of me but still  
her arms spread protect  
even me. Her breasts feed all.**

**(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019**

= = = = =

Besmirched by sun,  
baptized by rain  
the asphalt parking lot  
dreams and dreams.  
So many journeys here  
began and ended,  
so many embraces  
on backseat trysts  
and lovers' partings,  
so many weary  
walkers on their way  
to jobs, so many  
wearier still  
on their way home.  
And here I linger  
waiting for the rest  
of my life, I mean my wife  
and on cue the church  
bell rings the hour.

(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019

= = = = =

Tall man little dog  
leashed together,  
dog lags a little,  
little legs, feet  
quick but still  
always at the level  
of the man's rear leg,  
the stride.

(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019

= = = = =

**Church bells on the Dutch church  
play  
hymns, they'll make  
all of us Protestants again,  
Lord help me find my way away.**

**(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019**

= = = = =

Web absent spider  
without Penelope.  
Web of wire,  
so you are the spider—  
lines of sense  
strung across a town,  
an *eruv* for the goyim—  
dare not leave  
the precincts of this signal.  
The internet is your numerology,  
no web means no you.

(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019



= = = = =

Listen to the lingo  
of the leaves—  
    only mid-August  
and they talk about leaving,  
most of their work done.  
There is a kind of joyful  
melancholy, their slow adieux—  
it's kind of them to let me tune in.

(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019

= = = = =

Can't read, must write.  
Can't sing, must think—  
music is closest of all arts  
to the mind— pure  
neurology. Can't travel?  
Keep the sea nearby,  
we have a slice of it,  
ripe and gorgeous, a fjord  
full of it between  
mountains and our plains.  
O River of the North,  
come ocean me!

(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019

= = = = =

The huge crowd  
listens with one ear.  
No song. No sound.  
The windmills spin  
noiselessl, babies  
stifle their whimpers  
against their mothers' chests.  
Someone in a pink shirt  
angles through the crowd  
tormented by music  
only he can hear.

(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019

= = = = =

A blue car passes slow  
down the one-way street  
before the Shrine of Artemis.  
This is still the world,  
a lively, summer wind  
stirs up the bushes.  
A red car parked  
beneath the Goddess's  
outstretched hand  
revs up, quivers and goes.

.

(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019

= = = = =

Sunroof over me  
and over that a pale  
stretch of phone lines  
slicing through the blue.  
Precious visible,  
the skin of time!

(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019

= = = = =

**Waiting is a line.  
It runs through thought  
as if it knew.**

**(14 August 2019 — Kingston)  
revised 19 August 2019**

= = = = =

I wouldn't dare  
I am a married  
to the earth  
man—true,  
there is divorce  
but where to then?

And yet I try  
to interview the sky—  
why did ancient folk  
think the gods came  
down from there?  
Could all that brightness  
be just our faces reflected?  
But sometimes don't we dare  
reach out to touch the blue?

19 August 2019

= = = = =

Try something else  
the *fer* of difference,  
iron the soul needs

we hate nutrition, we like food  
hate philosophy, just want to be right  
hate how far away everything is  
but want to be there anyhow  
the beaches of Loca Coca,  
gilded domes of the furthest -stan.

but no, stay at home  
and read your Plato  
take B-Complex capsule  
don't scratch your mosquito  
bite, dab vinegar on it  
acid draws the poison out  
and hope for fair weather.

(The meaning of this poem is  
Don't do anything yet.)

19 August 2019



= = = = =

Then come back to the big island  
wearing your cloud.  
Swagger a little up along  
the ruin Broadway has become--  
why not, nobody cares,  
we're all busy dressing up and down  
for the endless Identity Parade  
I am no one at all but what you see  
i am my seemong and my costume  
the cross or star  
or pearls around my neck  
My soul is locked away from me  
in a place called My Identity--  
I will never know who I am.

19 August 2019

== ==

I'm too old  
to be an American.  
They aren't born yet,  
so they hate other people,  
people who were born already,  
or people like me  
who's being born  
even as we speak.

(16 August 2019)  
revised 20 August 2019

**AMARANTH,**

**the homecoming  
and the river  
you never heard of—  
why short of breath,  
why wave and no sea?  
Amaranth, come  
live in the Word,  
love or something like it  
always waiting,  
be my friend  
my fingers find  
the sleek softness  
of your time.**

**The new hour,  
the bower,  
the Amaranth Hotel  
where no one ever dies  
(amaranth means never-fading)  
but where the dancers sleep.  
And where does music sleep?**

**20 August 2019**

= = = = =

Inland  
be animal,  
almost,

crush of citizens  
around a bad idea—

shun that. Flee  
into me,  
            bend  
the bow,  
the bow is stronger than life,  
and aim is all.

20 August 2019

## **LASTING METAL**

**for Charlotte**

**Write on me quick  
before the light goes away.**

**I looked at Solomon  
and he too blinked his  
amorous eyes.**

**I am gold  
I last more of forever  
than anyone but you.**

**20 August 2019**

## **A WORD WOKE YOU**

**So look it up  
it's there to be kissed  
like any word  
hiding in the  
o no you can't find  
the dictionary**

**thank the lord  
for little blessings**

**so make it up instead,  
what does this word  
mean in you? A baker  
or his daughter?  
Tree top or bird in it?  
Maybe it means  
something not in you,  
not a memory, not even  
a thing outside you  
in the tender precincts  
of the known world,**

maybe (did you think  
of that when you woke)  
it's not even a word yet  
just a scrap of vowel music  
hummed out of sleep,  
a sound that needs  
to be a word, a word  
the needs you  
to make it up, make it  
mean, the way we try  
to give meaning to everything.

20 August 2019

= = = = =

**People who get up early  
have long fingernails.  
Fact. If you think this is silly,  
look down at your hands  
and try to remember. Who  
were you once? Are you  
the same one now? Or similar?  
Or as they say a shadow  
of some former self. Or was it  
even a self, back then, when  
you woke up early, saw  
the rising sun gleaming  
on your fingernails, your hands  
stretching out to grasp the world?**

**20 August 2019**



= = = = =

**All I want to do  
is say my prayers  
keep them purring  
in the cavern of my breath,  
keep them singing  
in the tavern of my will  
where words drink up  
new meanings and dance  
intensely in that space  
called time, time inside,  
hear my non-self praying,  
see my silence dancing too  
until the mind slumps  
smiling into peace.**

**20 August 2019**

= = = = =

**77 degrees  
inside a nd out,  
a harmony  
at last!**

**I imagine  
the sun is just now  
leaving her bed,  
I imagine that I  
am waking up  
on earth, I imagine  
there are such things  
as pieces of wood  
to build with or burn  
or just hoid in my bands  
and hope for rain.**

**21 August 2019**

=====

**People wait  
for the other side  
of everything.  
Where I stand  
waiting for them.**

**21 August 2019**

= = = = =

Picture it: a gull  
as if on a trapeze  
swooping low  
through the river air—

thank God for gulls,  
they mind our rocky  
shores give us  
not just the sea  
they come from  
but the sky they own  
and lend to us,  
a lake of light.

21 August

= = = = =

How much can we ask  
of the farmer--  
do his cows respect him,  
does his well  
never run dry?  
We re tortured by doubts  
but is he? Isn't he  
on te side of the esrth  
the lasting, the friend  
of us all? Yet when I  
was a child I saw them,  
craggy faces grey  
with what looked like pain,  
was it? Was it just age?  
The look of them scared me  
as if the earth took vengeance  
on those who plawed  
and dug and pulled living  
things out of the ground.  
I am an easily frightened child.

21 August 2019

## EYEDROPS

Eyedrops refresh the eyes  
then the eyes water a little  
and I think they're tears  
so I think I'm sad. A kleenex  
wipes the false tears away  
but who'll wipe away my sadness?

21 August 2019

= = = = =

Reverse logic.  
Trazom. The keys  
rattle in my head,  
I jave a door too,  
we are all houses  
ofone kind or another,  
Jagged mountain peaks  
snow slopes August  
s we landed in Innsbruck  
Mountain music. Trazom.  
Sun in the leaves. Who  
are you talking to, and why?  
Don't you see, every leaf  
is a tongue, every tongue  
has its word, every word  
mens you, so how can you sleep?  
Trazom in the trees, it's  
only natural, it's nature,  
that's what's wrog with it,  
with me. I am a prisoner  
of my body, I am logic,  
the music sinks me deeper

into myself. Trazom. Reverse  
the flow. Men are hammering  
on a neighbor house, nature,  
the demon of improvement,  
the demon who persuades men  
that noise is virie, good for business,  
helps the flag fly in this listless sky.  
Trazom. I turn on the radio  
like a man keeling before the Virgin,  
o Lady intercede for me, tell  
the music to cure me, tell it  
to tell me what my problem is,  
it's natnure, isn't it, the river  
that sweeps us along forever.

21 August 2019



=====

Would you even know  
what sorcery means  
if I relented and admitted  
I am a sorcerer?

Easy  
to admit the truth  
when truth is the furthest  
from anybody's mind.

Yes, I am a sorcerer,  
a canal runs through me,  
silken ad sinister ideas  
float by, gaudy or gloomy,  
all kinds pass along, pss  
the cathedral of my head  
on their way to the grotto  
of my heart.

You get the udea,  
the picture, yes? A sorcerer  
mens anybody with desires,  
anybody with anxieties, fears,

knowledge of the past. These  
idle words you hear from me  
are my spell, I'm cstring, casting  
but not on you, don't be afraid,  
I don't even know who you are.

21 August 2019

= = = = =

And things come after  
and the wve eas up  
reminding her  
of the one who once  
came from the se  
to save her from  
the country of men  
Not a man himself  
and not womn, white  
energy tht sid This  
is all you need.  
And the face f the sea sparkled like wine

21 August 2019

## WISHING WELL

I wonder  
is it still there  
the [enny I threw in  
when I was five  
in the White Mountains  
a famous well,  
bright copper penny,

and well means good  
to do things well  
or wish people well  
or say Be well,  
companion,

so good must come  
from water, water  
from the ground,

look down there, see  
the water sparkle  
and they told me at night

you can see the stars down there  
but that;s too late  
for me to be out,

and all the pennies  
down there, nickels  
too and even a few quarters,  
o America is a rich country  
I hear them say,

we must be living well.  
we have wealth, which sounds  
as if it also comes from well,  
from a well, from being well,

and isn't being  
itself  
being well?

And this well, this remembering,  
this penny lost and everything found,  
bright penny, bright mountains,

**o my love I wish you well,  
a sip of water for you  
from that well,  
framework of branches**

**and all the wishes mix together  
down there, the way the mind  
mixes together everything it knows,  
all the shiny pennies it remembers.**

**22August 2019**

= = = = =

I dream of two girls  
who teach me to make cheese  
I am so grateful that my students  
are teaching me at last,  
one fair one dark, the dark  
playful, voluble, the fair  
quiet and smiling, they give  
me a key to the place  
not far from my office  
where cheese is made,  
I find them at it when I come,  
and she looks up and says  
here is where we pour the magic in.  
O blessed dream where things are taught,  
I wake and look the process up,  
acids and rennets and bacteria,  
curds and whey but I  
can't forget the happiness of their smiles.

22 August 2019

=====

**Simplify. Be obvious.  
Be Schubert for a change  
and let your feelings show--  
but no, you want to be  
complex, intricate all the time,  
you want to be Beethoven's  
last sonata, the jazz of intellect  
holdings all your feelings at bay  
till some day they all say the same thing.**

**22 August 2019**



== == ==

Let the code  
solve itself.  
That's what numbers  
are good for,  
they dance together  
all night long  
while you struggle  
through the numberless  
realities of dream.  
You wake,  
the numbers sleep,  
leaving only a few  
od their dancers  
to solve your day with.

Note: The Jews made do with 22, we need 26,  
and those Russians, burdened with even  
more. No wonder Siberia is so ig. And just  
think of all the stars that shine on it.

22 August 2019

## **STREET**

**The eternity pf streets  
the one long block  
from Eleusis to Kingston  
where I sit in sun  
on a park bench  
on a middling busy street  
in a county called Ulster  
after another sacred  
land.**

**A tree of white  
pom-poms is in front of me,  
like hydrangea clusters,  
busy, but on a lone stalk tree.  
I wonder. Names are strange,  
we don't even know  
,most of us the meaning  
pf our own.**

But a street is always  
there, here, always leading,  
promising, cajoling, a street  
is Eden you can never  
be banished from, your house  
is on a street, the street  
loves us in its own way.

I'm thinking such things  
while people pass by,  
all of them moving briskly,  
obeying the *andiano!*  
of the street.

2.

There is a glare on the gleam of things.  
Hot day. We live in the street,  
the street lives in us. The women  
are on their mobile phones,  
the shrine of Artemis is a block away,  
listen to the oracle, it said  
The answer is always in the street.

**The answer is the street.  
Listen to it, even in America  
it knows and it tells,  
tells even you, who try to sit  
there moveless and watch it pass.**

**22 August 2019**

= = = = =

Let the clarity  
return,  
    crow over hemlock,  
woman at her house door,  
silver in dark cupboards,  
coyote yelps up the night road—  
life.  
    The things that know us.

23 August 2019

= = = = =

In that kind of church  
the organ plays by itself,  
the pale benches are empty  
but creak and groan  
beneath the weight of sunlight  
streaming down.

A traveler stumbles in  
seeking the mind of peace  
the busy forests all around  
deny,  
    stands looking around  
wondering where the altar is,  
then the word 'God' comes to mind  
and the traveler kneels down.  
amd hears a voice somewhere saying  
You brought me here with you,  
thank you, now you may go.

23 August 2019

=====

**Spurious alternatives:  
a tiger or a scarf,  
a child or a triangle.**

**23.VIII.19**

= = = = =

**The things we say  
to the stars at night  
but who's listening?  
Sometimes silence  
is an outrage.  
a kill-fee to squash  
the translation  
of our feelings into  
language, and language  
always means, can  
only mean, speaking to you.**

**23 August 2019  
Red Hook**



## THE INSTRUCTION

1.

Stand in the shadow  
and pray to the sun—  
this is the way.

Touch is all—  
so touch everything  
and be known  
in your knowing,

till the while world  
is sunlight on your skin

then stand in the shade  
and remember.

2.  
Something like that.

He mumbled from his sleep  
and was me.

I tried to understand  
the shimmer  
on everything I saw.

3.  
Everything is a confession.  
The fence post admits its stability,  
its complicity with property,  
the wall admits its work of separation  
and grives for all it keeps apart.  
And I stand trembling  
like a child, a child  
with a story book  
he still can't read  
but there are pretty pictures everywhere.

24 August 2019

=====

I sail from the general  
to the specific  
like some always  
trying to come home.

24.VIII.19

= = = = =

Woke at five o'clock  
don't know why  
no noise outside  
no light in the sky

In my sleep I was reading  
about a man who wrote a book  
all about the women in his life  
all full of praise,  
the hymns they sang  
the hips they swayed

and then I woke  
with a ditty in my head  
wondering what was the matter  
or who I was to meet in the dark,

I reckon it must be you.

25 August 2019

= = = = =

I can't understand  
how dark it is  
or even where the dark  
began. Why are we few  
and it so large?  
Is there really a river  
in the stars? They told me  
that when I was young--  
but who was I then, and when,  
and who were they?  
And does that river flow down now  
washing around me as I try to think?  
Go back to bed and close your eyes  
I think they said, *close*  
your eyes and find the real dark,  
the one with light inside it,  
the stars outside are only there  
to remind you of your business,  
humans are born to see through the dark.

25 August 2019

= = = = =

It gets so cosmological at night,  
doesn't it, Anne? Soon it will be September  
when you said we could meet,  
hour maple trees will let you go,  
the sweet old Bentley gear you near  
and we can jabber in what they call Real Time.  
But we know who the real time is,  
the one right now,  
the dark shimmer in the language  
that gets us going and sustains.  
We wouldn't even know  
each other without the words.  
So here in real time (no number,  
no weather, just now, right now)  
I think my way to hear you in my head  
abd naked myself at home in yours.  
Bonjour, poète, it's all cosmology,  
a sly Greek word meaning  
all the stuff we love to make up.

25 August 2019

= = = = =

And even now there's  
no light in the sky—  
it's the time Tibetans  
call the *tho-rang*, dark  
when the goddess wakes.

I suspect the night  
is running backwards  
again, though I dare not  
accuse my dark friend  
of timidity or even  
playfulness. I'll wait  
the daylight out, I too  
can be a child, I know  
the birds outside  
are with me, waiting to begin.

25 August 2019

= = = = =

**And where do mistakes come from  
anyhow, typos and false sums,  
misremembered addresses,  
phone numbers, husbands' names?  
Maybe now the sky seems  
ready to relent--shape of a tree  
shows now. Sunday morning  
almost, and no church.  
No priest but the enlightened citizen,  
the work of the hour is to build the day.**

**25 August 2019**



= = = = =

**Put down whatever you think  
when they ask for your name,  
age, profession, gender, faith.  
Just write down what comes to mind  
even if it doesn't fit inside the little  
box they give you on the form,  
just tell the truth,  
and the only truth is what you think,  
skylark and Passover, rye bread,  
Canterbury pilgrimage, silver dollar,  
string quartet and marry me.**

**25 August 2019**

= = = = =

1.

Going slow longevals us.  
A word flakes off the painting,  
a chip of truth, vermilion,  
leaves a pale cloud where it fell from,  
awkward landscape of a dark room,  
America before the war. But which?

2.

When kitchen tables still  
were made of wood,  
maple for preference,  
tight grain and smooth,  
then coffee lived in cups  
not mugs, had saucers  
under them and sugar  
came in cubes  
and the Old Man of the Mountain  
still looked over Franconia  
and kept the land at peace.

3.

Are these even my own lies  
or have I borrowed them  
from what I think are memories?  
Everyone's 'own' memory  
comes from, belongs to  
the world outside all round,  
one's own is other people's,  
so 'I remember' means  
You have to do this too!

4.

See, it does get easier  
as it goes along.  
Long life from going slow—  
the turtle's trick.  
With memory's own translucent shell.

5.

The things we wake up knowing  
are precious things, things  
that some mind knew  
before us, things that flake  
out of the landscape of dream.  
And there they are, in our mind  
our mouth, we breathe  
and say them to our lover,  
or jump up to write them down.

25 August 2019

= = = = =

**Plans are the Greek Kalends,  
the day between today and yesterday,  
the ship that sails upside down,  
the lighthouse under the sea,  
the earth adrift in space.  
Who pays the sun? Who plays  
the sinister role of Gravity?  
Why do we fall? Why,  
are we caught in someone's dream?**

**25 August 2019**

= = = = =

**Flowing backwards to Uncle Source  
the river escapes control. Soon  
the sea will flood inland, blue veins,  
arteries of salt heaven hithering!  
Joy to live into such an eon.**

**25 August 2019**

= = = = =

The hum in matter,  
tinnitus  
of things,

the disease of hearing,  
disease of having a self  
and having to listen to it  
all the time,

so learn to love  
whatever you hear,  
the ringing in the ears of things,  
the everlasting Scarlatti between the ears.

2.  
Nothing to hear  
but what you are.

so hold the hum.  
that sound like sunlight in the trees.

3.

Because what is  
will not be again

or yes it will  
but all the numbers change—

think how many  
seven will be then!

And what we hear now  
zre stars anyhow:

cpunt them at midday  
with all your eyes closed.

4.

Meaning to be mindful  
of what's to come,  
shale and quick rivulet  
and your poor self  
naked as a breath  
watching a kingfisher dive.



**Because if it happened  
it happens again  
till all the Christmases have come  
and the girl in the schoolyard  
reads your tarot cards  
and tells you who to be tonight  
if night ever comes.  
And you can still hear her hum.**

**26 August 2019**

= = = = =

Lift the children  
up to the sun  
so She can see  
some of what she has done,  
  
the energy, the work within  
that comes from outside  
  
the inside-out of all things—  
  
that is our liturgy.

26 August 2019  
Shafer

=====

**Brooklyn to Annandale  
a river journey  
sixty years.**

**27.VIII.2019**

= = = = =

ive an account  
of love's tracings  
precise as shadows  
leaves on trees  
cast on the ground  
late afternoon.

27 August 2019

= = = = =

And yesterday the blue  
flowers on the rose of Sharon  
so profuse  
were matched  
by patches of that same blue:  
the sky  
seen through so many trees,  
pure flowers of light.

27 August 2019

= = = = =

Tease me with space,  
go on, the bear  
squeezed in tight woods,  
words squeezed on the page,  
page squeezed in a book  
but I remember: I was a child,  
I looked up and saw  
a plane writing words  
in white smoke all over the sky--  
that's what I want,  
not wine squeezed in bottles,  
words as space,  
friends breathing through the sky.

27 August 2019

=====

Once I saw Napoleon  
riding past my window  
and once when I was on the swings  
I saw Beethoven walking  
through the park, his hands  
joined behind his back  
and he was humming.  
One night Dante came for supper,  
he nibbled a radish  
from my mother's plate  
and made my father frown.  
And once Moses came to visit,  
kissed me in my cradle,  
taught me a few words of Egyptian,  
lion, owl adobe.  
And when I still roamed  
in my mother's womb  
Astarte passed by whispering  
words I still almost remember,  
they sounded like this:

*Be quiet,  
my loving crows  
will teach you  
all you know  
and when that lesson  
ends it's time  
and time for you to wake--  
be born!*

27 August 2019



= = = = =

**Xerez**  
**is a town in Spain**  
**where a strong**  
**wine (fortified**  
**they call it)**  
**came from.**  
**And theEnglish**  
**loved it**  
**(the way**  
**they do, dark**  
**sweet things not**  
**always good for you)**

**and they called it**  
**by the town it came from,**  
**the Spanish of those days**  
**pronounced it *sherress***  
**(as Mexico used to be said Meshico)**  
**so the Brits heard *sherries*.**

But there was only  
one of it so they  
said This wine  
must be *sherry*  
because there's only  
one, and so it is.  
And there is still only one.

27 August 2019

**= = == =**

**Typing vs writing,  
different muscles  
make different hands  
make different sentences  
lines by lines  
as if the breath were somehow  
taught by the fingertips.**

**27 August 2019**

=====

## **Mysterium**

left over from  
stash of old magazines  
strange  
We read such things  
or saw  
our imaginations pictured  
devil within,  
faces and forms,  
beaches and farms,  
the mountains we would never climb.

2.

Is seeing a picture of Mt. Everest  
in a book different, and if so how,  
from seeing it from the window of a plane  
when a wise friend beside you  
touches your arm to get  
your attention and points  
out there and says Joma Lungma?

**3.**

**The mystery  
is in the seeing,  
we pay  
for seeing,  
we pay for what we see.  
The more we see the older we get.  
So stars are one thing only  
and never grow old.**

**4.**

**So carry the old Lives and Geographics  
to the recycle bin.  
The recycled image is halfway to heaven.**

**28 August 2019**

TO BE BORN AS A DAY  
and sleep yourself through  
swimming the combers  
of what comes crying, sighing,  
hammer tapping on a neighbor's roof  
o the peril of empty houses  
haunted by work,  
rest now, you are a cloud  
over the calm sea  
but even the calmest sea  
has waves, the rise and fall and  
onward thrust of information through  
the unchanging water--  
only the wave moves,  
the water stays. Capisce,  
little child? You will sleep all day  
and call it work and play  
and study and all the liturgy  
of public time, but by the grace  
of wind and birds and water,  
yes, water, drink now,  
it will be sleep.

28 August 2019

= = = = =

**And there are other fathers too  
and mountains that wake up at night  
and walk around.**

**And where they go  
is determined by your speech--  
they listen, they listen well  
to all the veiled or vague  
pesetations of your soul  
you favor language with.**

**And then they come.  
It has happened to me  
many a time, and that  
is why you ind me as I am.**

**28 August 2019**

= = = = =

Case of conscience  
help all you can  
and leave alone.  
Feel what they feel.  
Street overhead  
blanket of truth  
cars know the way by  
try[ing] to explain the dark  
a skater on the Danube  
a philosophy full of ink  
speak French with your nanny  
she's really only a girl  
how little you know!  
the time is ripe  
peel the fruit  
remember the dancer



I sad danger  
remember the rosefall  
we don't have chemistry anymore  
I hope the door is locked  
the sky is a sort of face  
we came here to get away from fact  
a goat appeared chewing on it  
furtive flag?  
Swear oath on your body  
a diesel honks [?] through the dark  
stay on your track  
the cynic in me barks at the sun  
when I have awakened enough I will sleep  
sleep that long permission  
a bridge, but over what?  
Someday the sea comes back  
so many places to go  
listen to the lady

embrace the obvious  
isn't that clear by now  
a question mark was just a Q.  
History is pure distraction  
learn from the future  
most birds know tomorrow today  
The view from the cry  
music in your arms  
are you old enough to know  
painted light  
thunder in the left hand  
saddle sore but the galley visited  
stir the edge the core will follow  
the loose of liberty  
a chorus of special silences  
touching things that aren't there  
the law tells stories  
a long Egyptian dream

**a Christian conspiracy called Love  
wallow in light  
now change your clothes  
sorting by sentences  
a grove by the sea  
sad woman with a fishing rod I saw**

**28 / 29 August 2019**

=====

After broken sleep  
the repairing light.  
Noise abounding—make  
the best of what bothers  
me I keep telling myself  
but how? Groan  
into music, whine  
into words.

29 August 2019

= = = = =

**You do it where you can,  
to hold the world together,  
you do it where you can  
like peeing in the woods  
or in the endless fields of lavender  
along the Calavon, you do it  
where you can, like your hand  
picking up a chip of stone  
along the beach, who knows,  
it might be marble, who knows,  
it might be just what you need.  
You do it where you can  
like shadow falling from a maple,  
like eating half the apple  
and tossing the rest to a place  
the deer will find it, you do it  
all day long if you're smart  
and then give over, stop,  
lie down, do nothing, sleep.**

**29 August 2019**

= = = = =

Or knowing  
where one has been,  
the irritant of sleep  
soothed by the pain of waking--  
mean dreams! Stare  
out the window and try to be you.

29 August 2019

= = = = =

Every glass singing  
a cut-glass song  
wake and see  
wake and see

The verses woke me and I rose—  
what could I do  
but answer language with movement?

Wake and see  
means Write it down,  
Look it up,  
Open the window  
take in the brand-new air

30 August 2019

= = = = =

Supply  
comes down the sky  
I looked it up  
in a book  
a woman gave us,  
I was ready  
and reading  
is believing,

the alphabet  
is proof of that  
we spell in our sleep  
and our dreams pronounce us,  
isn't that the case?  
*sleep on your left side*  
*wake with a plan*  
but the book didn't know  
that or if it did it didn't  
say, some days  
are just meant to be yesterdays.

30 August 2019



=====

Ravenous for complex taste  
we sugar coffee and salt  
everything else, bring out  
all your elements, traces  
of sea and desert, tumble  
down the cliffs in us and tell  
where you've been, we know  
where you come from  
but what have you seen?  
*In quo salietur?* He asked,  
how will you get the edges back,  
the sharpness, the roundness,  
or feel the hand that plucked it  
from the vine, kiss the fingers  
that blessed you with particulars?  
All you need are edges--  
the centers come rolling  
in all by themselves.

30 August 2019

= = = = =

I'm not it's not talking  
about the pain I feel  
it's not about talking  
not about feeling  
we've come too far  
from the seacoast for that  
*inland is silence inland is doubt*  
grassland prairie puszta steppes  
the plains are dreamland only  
come away as you can,  
all the fierce nomads in search of the sea--  
so there is a Genghis cruelty in each me  
to fight my way from the silence  
upward into the live silence  
where the fifth Buddha  
counsels us in dream  
to fear not feeling above all--  
start with the prairie dogs  
of Colorado, come out,  
say the sound you think is your name,  
come out come out and be  
joyously afraid--

**even rejection is  
a species of relationship.  
Or take a bus and get there fast,  
fold your arms and take a nap--  
the sky is blue just for you.**

**30 August 2019**

= = = = =

**And find out who is me.**

**Wake “me” in some sleep.**

**Open eye  
seize trees**

**is this what you expected?**

**Or go back  
into your old town**

**Or are you a telescope  
can only see  
what’s far away?**

**No, the tower.  
Hoist yourself high**

see that landscape,  
see that lady  
coming over it, the Sun?

have “you” begun?

is there a story  
in the weather?

What makes “you” think  
anything has changed?

This is still the Middle Ages  
the fox still lurks behind the ferns  
don’t even ask about the king.

31 August 2019

= = = = =

If I were near  
I would be there

but I am here  
a place of its own

I have to hurry  
to keep up  
with where I am—

sometimes here  
is the furthest place of all.

31 August 2019

= = = = =

A share of light  
to glean the day  
the orchestra of silence  
tunes its wings

something is out there  
and needs me

they scribbled little  
letters on all the leaves  
to instruct me

or deceive?  
Sweet if so, they want  
me to believe--

belief is good for the crops  
for the town

belief is to us  
as salt is to the sea.

31 August 2019

== ==

Carefully one  
by one lift  
the cloud down from the sky  
and loop it over your shoulders,  
braid them one by one  
into a fine shawl  
to shield you from forgetting--  
you feel its caress  
subtly wherever you go,  
you are never alone,  
the world is soft at your throat  
and the sky will always  
bring you some  
and even now your skin wants more.

31 August 2019



## THE INSCRIPTION

The way we do  
always means you--  
that's what it said  
above the stone gate  
unless b]my Greek  
is weaker than it was.  
Or could it mean A gate  
always goes in  
and you do too? I feel  
the stone, a little  
chunk of it crumbles,  
comes loose in my hand.  
Sometimes I ask  
too much of language.  
Or not enough.

31 August 2019